

## **Strengthening yak husbandry in North Sikkim through technological intervention and input support by ICAR**

Observing the ecological and economical importance of yak and poor living conditions under extreme harsh climate for the *Dokpas* (yak herders), ICAR-National Research Centre on Yak, Dirang, Arunachal Pradesh, ICAR-National Organic Farming Research Institute, Tadong and Department of Animal Husbandry Livestock, Fisheries and Veterinary Services, Govt. of Sikkim collectively organized various awareness health camps and input support at Lachen, Lachung for the yak herders of North Sikkim during Feb.10-11, 2017. Dr. Vijay Paul and Dr. Sourabh Deori from NRC on Yak, Dr. Brijesh Kumar and Dr. P.K. Pathak from ICAR-NOFRI and Dr. Sonam Dicky Lepcha, Dr. Hissey and Mr. Passang Bhutia from Department of A.H. L.F. and V.S., Govt. of Sikkim participated in the program. The main emphasis was given on the value addition of yak fibers and scientists from ICAR-NRC on Yak practically showed the blended yak and jutes fibers and highlighted the importance of yak fibers as it possesses high tensile strength, water proof nature and capacity to prevent UV rays. Further, various yak wool products like different types of jackets, file folders, bags and purse *etc.* were exhibited and also stressed on the value addition of meat and milk. Further, it was also suggested to link yak husbandry with tourism like yak safari, cafeteria based on yak products and e-marketing of yak products in national and international markets may be strengthened for the improvement of livelihood of yak herders. Around 40 quintal of balanced yak feed, 40 pairs of gum boots, still buckets for milking, umbrella, tarpaulin, solar lamps and rope *etc.* along with essential veterinary medicines and feed supplements were distributed among *dokpas* of Lachen, Lachung and Donkong valley of North Sikkim. The program was attended by Pipons of Dzumsa and more than 50 yak herders were present during the deliberation and distribution.



Discussion and distribution of medicines and basic amenities in the presence of Pipon to yak herders at Lachen



Group photographs with yak herders at Lachen



Visiting scientists with yak herders at Lachung



Distribution of inputs to yak herders in the presence of Pison and SDM at Lachung